

Remarks

Claims 1 – 22 are pending in this application. Claims 12 - 22 have been withdrawn, and Applicants hereby affirm the election of claims 1 - 11. Claims 7 – 10 are allowed and claims 1 – 6 and 11 have been rejected in the current Office Action.

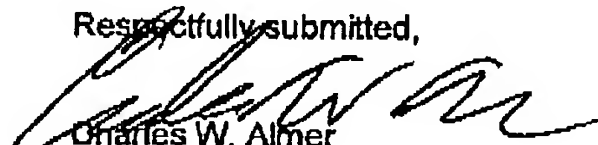
Claim 1 was objected to as containing an informality. Claim 1 has been amended as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw the objection to claim 1.

In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 7 – 10 contain allowable subject matter. Applicants are grateful for this indication. Accordingly, base claim 1 has been amended to include substantially the limitations of claim 7. Claim 7 has been cancelled and claim 8 has been amended so that it is now dependent upon allowable claim 1. Claims 2 – 6 and 9 – 11 are directly or indirectly dependent upon allowable claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 – 6 and 8 – 11 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 1 – 6 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by US Patent No. 5,173,551, issued to Caneba. Claims 1 – 6 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as anticipated by Caneba et al (Clean Prod. Processes 3, 55-59 (2001)). In view of the amendments in which the allowable subject matter of claim 7 was incorporated into claim 1, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and 35 U.S.C. 102(a).

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. If there are any issues that the Examiner wishes to discuss, please contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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